

THAMES DITTON TODAY

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NATURE & CLIMATE



FESTIVAL

23rd - 25th September 2022

Thames Ditton & Weston Green Residents' Association



THE MAGAZINE OF THE
THAMES DITTON & WESTON GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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THAMES DITTON TODAY

Published quarterly since 1970

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Thames Ditton Today is delivered to an influential 5000 households throughout Thames Ditton, Weston Green and East Molesey. Contact Verity Park for rates for full page, half and quarter page advertising.

In this Issue:

News from the Residents' Association	7
Update from your Residents' Associations' Councillors at Elmbridge Borough Council	12
Update from Nick Darby, Surrey County Councillor	14
Operation Marney Association.....	15
Weston Green's Secret Gardens 2022	17
The Brownies are 'greenies'	19
Inaugural Climate and Nature Festival	21
Climate and Nature Festival programme	23
Local musician receives British Empire Medal Honour.....	27
In praise of Long Ditton Recreation Ground	33
Albany Reach life saving equipment	35
Meet your distributors	39
Soroptimist International	41
Summer crossword solution	42
Autumn crossword	43
Services, Clubs, Societies and Groups.....	44
Life saving defibrillator at the Vera Fletcher Hall	46

Cover: Lisa Tolley. See Lisa's work at lisatolley.co.uk

www.residents-association.com

Officers and staff of the Association are volunteers, but we must fund costs of this magazine, administrative and election expenses, and other expenses such as spring bulb-planting and village Christmas trees. The subscription is only £5 per household. If you can contribute more, please do so. Subscriptions can be paid via our website www.residents-association.com; subscriptions (in an envelope please) may be left at Boots Pharmacy, 14 High Street, Thames Ditton or Thorkhill Road Pharmacy, 94 Thorkhill Road, Thames Ditton. Or mail to Membership Secretary Peter Haynes at 6 Onslow Gardens, Thames Ditton KT7 0JJ. Thank you.

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THAMES DITTON AND WESTON GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

About the Association

Founded in 1934 our Association is a strong, locally based non-party-political organisation concerned with protecting the amenities and furthering the interests of residents.

We work to preserve and enhance the best in our attractive environment and the quality of life of everyone in our community.

Through regular meetings, social activities, our magazine and website we keep in touch with residents' views and we raise and spend funds for the benefit of the community, from tree and bulb planting to contesting unacceptable development projects.

With six Residents' Councillors covering the two electoral wards we have a strong voice on Elmbridge Council working with other Residents' Councillors to ensure that decisions are based on the needs of local communities and on good management rather than on party politics.

Our Residents' County Councillor, Nick Darby, represents our views at Surrey County Council.

President: Martin Wilberforce

7 River Avenue,
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Planning: Rhodri Richards,
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Willow End, River Bank, Thames Ditton 07736 677671



THE NEXT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION OPEN MEETINGS ARE

Tuesday 20 September, 8pm– Vera Fletcher Hall

Tuesday 29 November, 8pm– Vera Fletcher Hall

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News from the Residents' Association to mid-August



Countdown to our Nature and Climate Festival



We are getting excited about our nature and climate festival September 23 – 25.

This is an event for the whole community to encourage everyone to think about our natural surroundings and what we can do to live more sustainably. There are four themes:



Rivers & Oceans



Rewilding



The Circular Economy



Living Sustainably

See page 21 and the centre spread to find out more.

Volunteers needed

We are looking for volunteers to help with the Nature & Climate Festival, from stewards, to host families for speakers, to drivers to poster sites.

If you can help, please contact gcoates@residents-association.com (if you have previously volunteered and had an acknowledgement there is no need to do so again.)

Photography Competition deadline extended to September 16

The competition is open to all ages and you can enter your photographs in **four** categories:

- Nature & wildlife - the animal world
- Nature & wildlife - local plant life
- Thames Ditton & Weston Green's Natural Environment - our natural surroundings
- New category! International wildlife

See page 19 of our summer edition or the website residents-association.com for more details and super prizes..



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Ditton Garages, Southville Road, Thames Ditton, KT7 0UL

Lighting to Esher Station

During her time as an RA Councillor, RA Vice President Tannia Shipley campaigned vigorously to have lighting on the alleyway to Esher Station.

All that work is bearing fruit as the lamp posts are now in place. Fingers crossed the lamps follow before the nights draw in.



Just waiting for the lamps to light up the alleyway

Open Meetings

June's Open Meeting was held at Imber Court and it was great to see a number of new faces. Residents of Orchard Lane were able to discuss approaches to planning consultation and meet with our planning convener Rhodri Richards. Why not come and join us at an Open Meeting?

Planning

The August planning committee refused the application 2021/3857 for an Aldi Store on the Guy Salmon site. See the update from our RA Councillors on page 12 for further details.

We were disappointed when Alexpo's appeal against EBC's refusal of planning permission for a massive development at the **Jolly Boatman site (2018/3810)** was granted after what seemed a minimal amount of consideration by the planning inspector. The latest news is that Elmbridge Borough Council has requested a Planning Statutory Review. See the update from our RA Councillors on page 12 for more details.



Image from application for Café Rouge site

A second outline planning application has been **Café Rouge Site, Portsmouth Road (2022/2191)**.

This application reduces the development from seven storeys to six but is still a massive development out of keeping with its position adjacent to common land.

The application by Igloo Land Ltd, for an expanded commons easement permitting wider access to the planned **Merrywood** development, has now been approved by the Planning Inspectorate. The development of 12 semi-detached houses and 14 flats is now free to proceed.

River Thames Scheme next round of consultation

The River Thames Scheme, intended to alleviate flooding, has been under development for years. We publicised the 2016 consultation and provided feedback.

Due to its huge scale, the project is treated as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). Other examples of NSIPs might be a wind farm or airport expansion.

NSIPs require a type of consent known as 'Development Consent Order' (DCO) which removes the need to obtain many separate consents, including planning permission. It is designed to be a quicker process than applying for these separately.

The DCO must be granted before full funding is approved and construction can begin.

An application is being prepared for the DCO which we expect to be presented to a planning inspector in September, when parties with an interest in the scheme will be able to comment. You can find out more at www.riverthamesscheme.org.uk



Welcome to Craft my Day

Welcome to new business, Craft My Day, Thames Ditton High Street, which offers a range of craft classes from sewing to glass fusing and jewelry making. Find out more at www.craftmyday.com



Craft my day, Thames Ditton High Street

Weston SuperMares are back



Weston SuperMares are back performing

For the first time since the pandemic, the wonderful Weston SuperMares performed an outstanding array of popular music to a packed audience at All Saints Weston Green. The performance was spellbinding, acoustics were fantastic and huge thanks to Bee Cassidy and the 'Mares' for such an uplifting summer's evening of entertainment and to the All-Saints team who produced a home cooked supper for over 100 people.

Community hub in Weston Green

The church hall at All Saints has become a busy community hub. Week after week the hall is filled with numerous local groups including Brownies, Rainbows, Guides, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts as well as Pilates, Dance Classes, Tai Chi, Theatre Groups, Cookery and of course the All Saints Community Lunch on the last Wednesday of every month.

It is hoped that as many people as possible will try out some of these activities and enjoy learning new skills and meeting new people. Set in the heart of Weston Green, close to the pond and the green, with plenty of parking, an outdoor activity space and a fully equipped kitchen, the hall is a great venue whatever your event. If you run a class or would like to hire the hall for a private event or children's party, then you can book online at:

<https://allsaintsweston.com/the-hall>



All Saints Weston Hall

Dates for your diary

Nature & Climate Festival

September 23 – 25

See page 23 for programme

Farmers' Market

Mercer Close Car Park (opposite the Library), fourth Saturday of the month

Weston Green Litter Pickers

Meet at Marneys pub on the first Saturday in the month at 10.30am

Thames Ditton Litter Pickers

Meet in Thames Ditton Tennis Club car park third Saturday of the month at 10.45am

All Saints Weston Community Lunch

from 11.30 - 2pm on the last Wednesday of every month.

To book in, contact Alison Cruthers on **07957 347170** or alisoncruthers@yahoo.co.uk

Bereavement Café (open to all)

Third Tuesday of the month, 10.30 am - 12 noon. St. Nicholas Church Hall Call **020 8398 9641** for more information.

Esher French Circle

Third Wednesday of most months, West End Village Hall, Esher, 7pm .

'Encouraging French lovers to keep up with or improve their French'.

Visit www.cerclefrançais-eshes.uk to find out more or contact club secretary; Brigitte Tiller brigitte@ptiller.com or **07896 233728**

Residents' Association

www.residents-association.com

or follow us on Twitter [@TDresidents](https://twitter.com/TDresidents)



Update from your Residents' Associations'

Thames Ditton Ward



Karen Randolph
TDWGRA



Caroline James
TDWGRA



Alex Batchelor
TDWGRA

Aldi Application

The controversial planning application to convert the Guy Salmon site on Portsmouth Road to an Aldi has taken up a great deal of Councillor time. Residents expressed concerns about the conversion of the site into a supermarket and the impact that would have on their lives. The application was for a change of use of the land to class E (Commercial, Business and Service). Whilst some people wrote in favour of an 'Aldi' members had to determine the use of the land alone rather than the brand. What could be an Aldi one minute could easily become a drive through McDonalds the next.

Members of the Planning Committee listened intently to the arguments for refusal put forward by the RA Councillors. In the end 18 members voted against the application (with two in favour and one abstention) for the following reasons:

- impact on the neighbours (particularly Westville Rd)
- principle of development and impact on Thames Ditton and Weston Green
- commercial and evening use which is out of character

- harm to the conservation area not outweighed by the public benefits
- the removal of the cycle lane, contrary to Surrey County Council policy

Aldi have deep pockets and we expect they will appeal the decision. We will keep everyone updated.

Jolly Boatman site

Another contentious planning application has been for a large development on the 'Jolly Boatman' site opposite Hampton Court Palace. EBC refused planning permission on July 19, 2021.

The applicant appealed the decision and, following a public enquiry, the Planning Inspector issued his decision that the appeal was allowed and therefore permission has been granted.

However, all is not lost. There is no right of appeal against an appeal decision but there are other avenues of challenge and after careful consideration of the Planning Inspector's reasons for approving the development and taking specialist legal advice, the council has served the Secretary

Councillors at Elmbridge Borough Council

Hinchley Wood and Weston Green Ward



Gill Coates
TDWGRA



Janet Turner
HWRA



James Crawshaw
HWRA

of State with the claim for a Planning Statutory Review.

This request for a review seeks to quash the appeal, on the basis that the Inspector failed to give legally adequate reasons for his disagreement with the advice of Historic England. The first stage is that the council is required to obtain permission from the courts to proceed, if that permission is agreed the Council can proceed to a hearing for a judge to consider the matter. This could take months.

One thing worth clarifying, despite the rumours circulating on social media, the status of the Local Plan has no bearing on the outcome of this planning appeal. All applications are determined by their own merit taking into account policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Climate Change at the heart of the new Draft Local plan

Climate Change is at the heart of the new Draft Local plan which your councillors have been very closely involved with.

It states *‘Elmbridge will be more resilient to climate change, the council accepts its responsibility to make a resilient*

environment to reduce carbon emissions and to deliver positive outcomes for future generations. The council will positively lead on a commitment to ensure every decision is made with the achievement of low carbon and net zero in mind with delivering sustainable growth as standard. The council will renew, enhance and protect green and blue spaces.’

Outdoor play

Our children need to be outdoors playing with their friends and families. The RA/LD administration want to ensure a sustainable and thriving Elmbridge will always provide opportunities for play in the 100’s of parks, recreation grounds and open spaces we provide and maintain across the borough.

Among the sandpits, natural play equipment, the swings and the skateparks, we have two paddling pools in Weybridge, provided since the 1950s. However, they are costly both financially and environmentally; the paddling pools need to be emptied and refilled with water every day they are in use.

It is time to consider the future of the two paddling pools and to determine how they fit into Elmbridge’s sustainable future and a consultation will take place over the next few months.

Update from Nick Darby, our Surrey County Councillor



I have just met with Surrey officers and the great news is that early next year, the Mercer Close Library will have significantly increased 'open access' beyond current hours. Existing staff numbers will not be reduced. As a result of new technology, library users will have extended access using their library card. It is likely access/opening hours will be from 7am to 10pm.

Albany Reach continues to be well-used in this heat. We were able to deal with some of the parking issues 12 months ago. Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC) and some fantastic residents have worked amazingly to deal with the litter which sadly results - I just wish everyone would take their litter home! Working with a local resident and EBC, plans are well advanced to install some "throw lines" at Albany Reach for use in case anyone gets into difficulty in the water. EBC will install these once we finalise what the equipment should be, and I will be funding this from my Surrey allowance.

Whilst the Hampton Court Flower Show remains hugely popular it does cause traffic issues. I am pleased to say that working with residents, I should shortly be meeting with Surrey Highways to discuss what they can do to improve the situation. In addition, further work is needed on Hampton Court Bridge to ensure full compliance with the planning permission granted. I have continued to express concerns over the cycle arrangements when crossing north/south.

Briefly on local roads, I am thrilled to have heard from Surrey Highways that they will resurface Imber Grove next year. Work on St Leonards Road appears imminent, as does resurfacing of the pathway from there



Surrey County Councillor, (The Dittons) Nick Darby

to the George and Dragon.

The next round of potential parking changes is for review, so please contact me if you have anything in mind.

Surrey County Council has responded to the Mayor of London's proposed extension of the the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) regarding both scrappage and that people should not be charged to drive between Hampton Court Bridge and the M3 at Sunbury as MORE emissions will be created as people seek to avoid a £12 fee.

And to finish with some thanks - to the Elmbridge Countryside Team for a brilliant clean-up job after the Travellers departure from near the Scilly Isles - and to the Thames Ditton Foundation and Tricia Bland as the Jubilee display of flags, posters, bunting and decorations in Thames Ditton High Street were described as the best in Elmbridge. These and the throw-lines initiative are what makes me proud to be part of the Dittons community.

Nick Darby,
Surrey County Councillor for the Dittons
0208 398 2382

Operation Marney Association



Marney's pond 2022, showing the effects of climate change

We have watched in despair as Marney's pond has been left virtually dry during the dry spell this summer. Thankfully someone had the foresight to remove the fish from the final 'puddle', but we are all waiting for the rain to come and save our pond.

Coincidentally the pond was in a very similar situation almost exactly 30 years ago when the Operation Marney Association was set up – a group of local heroes who came together to restore the pond which had been damaged by low rainfall, vandalism and general neglect. They were determined to bring the sad looking pond back to life and restore resident and visitor enjoyment by ensuring it was full of water providing a home to swans, ducks, fish, herons as well as tadpoles and newts.

Thanks to the help of expert advice from several professional bodies, including Elmbridge Council, a restoration plan was

drawn up and community fundraising including a Grand Barbecue at The Alma (now Marneys) in August 1992 raised £1,000, which along with various other donations enabled the project to go ahead.

The work included refurbishment of the drainage system and laying a new watertight bed using puddling clay. The original quotation for the work stood at £25,000 but costs were significantly reduced due to individual sponsorships and through 'hands on' manual labour by local residents.

The final phase of the project was for local firemen, from four different fire stations, to pump water back into the pond until it was half full and then allow nature to take its course so that it could be completely full within a year.

The way the pond looks now it may be time for another group of local heroes to step up.

Louise Russell



Operation Marney Association

RESTORATION OF MARNEY'S POND

By Cherie Prebitt

Perhaps this should have been appropriately be renamed Marney's Lake? It's surprising that two large the original basin was, combined by plastic held by the owners of The Holly Broom, and now taking shape under the care of The Water Group, are contractors.

The initial part of the pond raising effort was coordinated with the Grand Marneur to The Area as early August when we raised 15,000. We had tried to arrange only one mechanical layer to complete the raising. However, so many people around the 400 ft foot was quickly exhausted. A crewing back you're never who identifies had a very small bank and still almost two feet.

The heavy was completed on 27th August, having raised some 4700, and the last contractor left, about another 1000. The special thanks to the business community who donated gear, especially Laser Personal Computer.

As we signed up the financial supporters over months for all donations were available. Thames Water Management donated around 100,000 pounds worth of pushing that to form a new waterway bed. A. J. Bull provided as much equipment as possible to bring the city to sea, and Phyllis J. J. Lee gave her son of a tractor to replace and compact the clay. These were invaluable and obviously raised the status amongst and we were delighted to support The Water Group to start work on the waterway, bringing the right help for the job.

Thanks to the people who allowed us to proceed from the beginning and just before were received by Marney's and around at. Some thanks to us and those of them and related value.

The whole committee made into the daily work being done on raising to 1.00 a.m. in a business and slowly observe what to provide like. Marney to be in around work for better. I can remember when that Marney did not respond to how his paper being long two large self sets, what said and they would simply do it for the other staff. The same however, but a happy ending, especially strong materials. It may well could this was observed as a home one, which people value in their own beliefs and have more than.

By Peter Atkins



Many people remember Marney's Pond by All Saints Church which it was full of water and boats in twos, threes, fife and beyond, not to mention all the tubs and more. But today it is a sad looking place (see above). The best caused by neglect, lack of care and sanitation.

Now Cherie Prebitt is leading a group 'Operation Marney Association' to restore the beautiful part of Weston Green, a vital planning and research has been carried out with expert advice from many professional bodies.

The first sponsor for the work of the Association was Thelma Pitt Louise Services, which kindly arranged for a complete ecological landscape and drainage survey and restoration drawings to be produced. This drew particular attention to the need to provide and appealing and safe environment to encourage the wildlife to return, which being modified of the ponds for the community to enjoy the future, such that the pond sites provided, across a broad band of water. It is to this specification that the contractor's contract has started.

The quotation is to the order of £25,000. It is an amount of money and Operation Marney Association is most grateful of obtaining sponsorship for the initial work. In local raised below to indicate that it is understandable. The very work of Cherie's team has offered to donate the pushing clay which will form a waterway bed for the new pond. The same firm can provide the lorry to bring the material to site, but the actual transport costs however, must be met. This item and others are the subject of funds being raised to meet the local community.

Funding activity start is invited on.

**SUNDAY MARCH 20th, 1.00-5.00 pm
IMBER COURT MET POLICE AND FISHER COLLEGE**



The Weston Green Community Archive record book from 1993, captures the history of the Operation Marney Association. The article featured was first published in Thames Ditton Today in 1993.

Weston Green's Secret Gardens 2022



Rewilding was a theme in 2022

The annual Secret Gardens event took place on Sunday June 26 and 2022 saw residents of Weston Green letting us into their secret back gardens and not-so-secret front gardens.

This year rewilding was definitely a theme, with three of the show gardens giving us a taste of gardening with wildlife in mind. Paula and Gary Ayres demonstrated how you can attract a range of local wildlife, including solitary bees, various birds (including a visiting sparrow hawk) and hedgehogs, and still have a beautiful 'formal' garden that is a feast for the eyes. Gill and Nigel Coates had left one third of their garden unmowed since 2020 and the resulting 'meadow' is now home to a range of perennial wildflowers and grasses.

Most of the gardens were on show for the first time, but regular Weston Green garden visitors would be disappointed if we had not included Gerald Smith's garden, a plant paradise including velvety-leaved hostas that were the envy of everyone.



Modern gravel garden

Modern gardens were also in evidence and everyone admired the lovely gravel garden with corten steel raised beds belonging to Kwok Liu, only in its second year.

In all, eight local gardens were on show, along with the Memorial Garden at All Saints Church and the corner bed at the Co Op which has been replanted by volunteers from Esher & Molesey Garden Society.

A total of 308 tickets were sold in aid of the RA and volunteers from All Saints worked hard all afternoon to provide fabulous teas, with help from the 3rd Weston Green Brownies and donations from the CoOp (profits went to the church).

The RA would like to thank Messrs Ayres, Coates, Dunkley, Harris, Haynes, Liu, Luker and Smith, for opening their gardens and Mrs T Shipley and Cllr G Coates for organising.



Tea and cake, an important part of a garden visit!

**Secret Gardens
2023**

Will be in Thames Ditton.

If you would like to be involved
please contact

editor@residents-association.com

cards and gifts

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The Brownies are ‘greenies’!



3rd Weston Green Brownies and their haul of litter!

One very hot evening in July, keen volunteers from the 3rd Weston Green Brownie group, based at All Saints Church, donned high-visibility jackets, picked up their litter sticks and set off in two groups around Ditton Common to collect the litter that had been deposited since the last RA group litter pick.

In just 30 minutes the two groups collected

almost a full bin bag each - a sad reflection of the problem we have, but a wonderful testament to the Brownies' eagle eyes and determination to leave no stone unturned.

The girls volunteered to do this as one of their activities to help their local community and we were delighted to help such an enthusiastic group with the loan of our equipment.



3rd Weston Green Brownies, on Ditton Common

A more thoughtful approach to law

Pleased to support
The Nature and Climate Festival

**We do the right thing for the
environment. We:**

- **offset all our carbon emissions**
- **have two beehives on the roof**
- **have solar panels on our Putney office**
- **have a paper-free policy in place**
- **recycle our waste**
- **use sustainable suppliers where we can**



The RA's inaugural Nature & Climate Festival, September 23 – 25



Record temperatures and drought warnings have served to remind us that the window for addressing the crisis in climate and nature is fast closing. Here in our beautiful tranquil community we are particularly alert to problems such as plastic litter. But how does this all tie together? And how can we in live greener, lower impact lives but also become more resilient in the face of unprecedented change? Well prepare to harness your inner Sir David Attenborough as we welcome the Thames Ditton and Weston Green Residents' Association inaugural **Nature & Climate Festival**, sponsored by Russell Cook - Solicitors.

Kicking off on the afternoon of Friday September 23 with a talk on *Gardening for Wildlife* and stretching over the weekend to our *Whale Bath Finale* on Sunday 25, the event will bring a tantalising mix of speakers, authors, workshops and top tips for green living and future-proofing your life in this community.

The Festival Hub for the weekend will be in the Thames Ditton Community Centre. Here you will be able to:

- See an exhibition of the best entries to our Nature and Climate Photography

competition and vote for your '*people's choice*'

- Buy a packet of Festival native wildflower seeds to plant a 1m x1 m patch in your garden and make Thames Ditton & Weston Green a patchwork for wildlife! (Sponsored by the Co Op)
- Come and make your pledge on the Pledge Tree. What have you learned and how will you do things differently? (Sponsored by Killik & Co)

Other venues include the Library, Vera Fletcher Hall and the riverside.

The festival has four themes: **rivers and oceans; rewilding; sustainable living; the circular economy** (doing more with fewer resources). Look out for the theme logos designed by Thames Ditton artist Lisa Tolley at venues and supporting businesses and in the programme.

The festival is the brainchild of a group of local residents, RA Councillor Gill Coates, RA Councillor Caroline James, Katie Randerson and Lucy Siegle.

"As a large local business, we have a responsibility to the community. We commit to: carrying out our business in a sustainable way; minimising our impact on the environment through an awareness of the resources we use, the waste we produce and our carbon emissions; sustaining natural resources where we can.

It is our great pleasure to support the Nature and Climate Festival as a forum for us to share what we are doing and what we've learnt, as well as to learn from others.

We hope you all have a wonderful weekend!"

John Gould, Senior Partner, Russell-Cooke Solicitors - Main Festival Sponsors

Lucy is a journalist and broadcaster, who has long made environmental issues her thing. For the festival she has mined her address book. *“I am so pleased that almost everybody I’ve asked to come has instantly said ‘yes’ and those who couldn’t make it this time have promised to come next year!*

We’ve got lots of internationally rated TED talk speakers and workshops. Add this to all our local environmental talent, it’s shaping up to be an unforgettable weekend that will turbo charge our response to the climate and nature crisis”.

The event launches with **Lucy’s Big Green Quiz** at the George & Dragon pub on the Friday night and sets the scene for a packed programme

We are looking forward to seeing you there and making a difference for our planet!

The TD&WGRA would like to say a big thank you to Festival sponsors Russell-

Cooke Solicitors and to Elmbridge Borough Council, Killik & Co and the Co-op for their support.



Finale presenter Tom Mustill with co-organiser Lucy Siegle

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Nature and Climate Festival Programme

Thanks to our festival sponsors



Our timetable is still taking shape but it is looking GREAT with something for everyone. For up-to-date information as it is added, including new events, please head to the Residents Association website (www.residents-association.com) where the full programme and booking details (for the ticketed activities) is available. Most events are free to enter although there is a charge for some events and activities.

Follow us on Twitter and Instagram @TDClimateNatureFest and look out for the free programmes appearing in local venues and shops from September 12.

Friday September 23

Gardening for Wildlife Talk

Organised by Squire's Garden Centre in the café at Long Ditton at 4.30pm.

Cost: £5 (in aid of Voices for Hope) including refreshments. Book online with Squires.

Lucy's Big Green Quiz Quiz night

George & Dragon, High Street, Thames Ditton, 7pm Tables for four.

The Festival launches with a bang! Local environmental writer and quiz obsessive, Lucy Siegle is quiz master with a host of questions designed to test your knowledge of the biosphere and green living today. Will your team be crowned The Ultimate Friends of the Earth? (Yes, there will be a trophy!)

To book a table contact Cllr Caroline James (cost £20) carolinejames1@gmail.com

Saturday, September 24

Wake up, clean up! Community Activity (unguided)

It's Nature & Climate Weekend! Set your alarm half an hour early, arm yourself with rubber gloves and a plastic bag and do a litter pick on an early morning walk.

Or join forces with our riverside litter pickers on the banks of the Thames to purge the river of plastic.

Water Quality Workshop with Hugo Tagholm, CEO *Surfers Against Sewage*.

Workshop

Riverside venue and time t.b.c. (children must be accompanied by an adult.)

Hugo Tagholm is an award-winning campaigner, surfer and TEDx speaker who leads the national marine conservation and campaigning charity *Surfers Against Sewage*. Hugo will use his considerable experience to look at our river and water quality and discuss how to improve and protect it.

Build a Bird Box Demo

Thames Ditton Community Centre, At 10am and again at 12.00 noon.

A family activity run by Men in Sheds. Watch how to make a bird box with the option to buy a kit at the end.

Making Plastic Count with Daniel Webb Talk and Q&A

Vera Fletcher Hall, 11am-12 noon

Hear from Daniel Webb who went from being annoyed about plastic waste on the beach in his hometown of Margate to

starting a campaign that would influence government. Find out how he ended up with 22 bags of his own plastic waste in his spare room, the extent of our addiction to plastic and what he thinks we should do about it.

Create your own solar panel!

Workshop

Thames Ditton Community Centre, 11am - 3pm

In this unique workshop you can learn how solar panels are made and make your own solar panel to charge phones and laptops.

Led by Agamemnon Otero MBE, the CEO of Energy Garden and co-founder of Community Energy England.

Open to adults and children over 10 (under 16s must be accompanied by an adult).

Cost: £40 adult, £20 under 16 (includes materials)

Please book via Gill Coates (see page 5 for contact details.) 30 places available.

Investing your money for good

Seminar

Thames Ditton Community Centre
11am and repeated at 1.30 pm

Our Pledge Tree sponsors, financial advisers Killik & Co, will run two seminars on how to invest your money sustainably.

How to change things

Talk, Q&A, book signing

Vera Fletcher Hall, 1-2 pm

Come and meet The Green Grocer and The Sustainable Surfer!

Richard Walker OBE, is MD of supermarket chain Iceland, a BBC Question Time stalwart and an uncompromising defender of the planet. Hugo Tagholm is the inspirational CEO of *Surfers Against Sewage*. In this event, the two friends and campaigners are in conversation, giving major insight into how you actually achieve positive change at scale. (Followed by a book signing of *The*

Green Grocer' by Richard Walker.)

Repair Cafe & Five Minute Fixes

Talk and demo

Thames Ditton Community Centre 2pm -5pm
Elmbridge's own Repair Café (based in Walton) will be on hand to explain about the Repair Cafe movement, find out how to set one up and learn a few easy fixes at home to reduce waste, repair and recycle.

Spend a Trillion on the Planet!

with Rowan Hooper **Talk , Q&A, book signing**

Vera Fletcher Hall, 2- 3pm

In this exclusive session you get to help the author of the smash hit book *How to Spend a Trillion Dollars: the ten global problems we can actually fix* spend in order to save (us). Join Rowan as he uses science and economics to price up what we really need to do to halt climate change and dial up renewable energy.

Natural Flow Writing with Katie

Randerson Workshop

Thames Ditton library, 3-4.30pm

Taking inspiration from nature, writing tutor Kate Randerson guides us through a relaxed session of reflective, creative writing.

Up to 15 places, sign-up in the Library from September 12. Free.

Gaia's Planet with Gaia Vince

Talk, Q&A, book signing Vera Fletcher Hall, 3-4pm

The science writer and broadcaster, Gaia Vince is the first ever female winner of the Royal Society book prize. In this conversation with Lucy Siegle she will discuss her Royal Society award winning book, *Adventures in Anthropocene: A Journey to the Heart of the Planet we Made* and her recently published new

work, *Nomad Century: How to Survive the Climate Upheaval*.

Making a difference in business **Talk**

Thames Ditton Community Centre, 3.00pm
John Gould, Senior Partner at Festival sponsors Russell-Cooke Solicitors, will explain the innovative steps his business is taking to move towards sustainability.

Changing Fashion with Safia Minney **MBE Talk**

Vera Fletcher Hall, 4.30 - 5.30 pm

Hear from entrepreneur and fashion activist, founder of People Tree and Regenerating Fashion, Safia Minney MBE, will talk to us about sustainable fashion.

We are the Voice, Children's Choir

Vera Fletcher Hall, 6pm - Free

A moving performance from the children's environmental choir, *We Are The Voice*, who sang at COP26.

Sunday September 25

Green gym workout

with Liam Grimley, Elevate Sport - sponsored by Neal's Yard Remedies.

Giggs Hill Green, 9.30am., (All levels of fitness.)

We know the power of the great outdoors to heal and sustain us. How do we maximise the outdoor workout so it is low impact for the planet but transformative for us? Local fitness professional Liam Grimley shares some of his secrets in this special session.

Kids: grow your own clothes with Bella! **Workshop**

Thames Ditton Community Centre, 10am-12pm

Get your stylish kids (4-12yrs) eco-printing with the captivating fashion designer and author, Bella Gonshorovitz. They will learn about the colours you can get from vegetables, fruit and plants and how to make

eco fabric using petals and kitchen scraps, Places for up to 12 children. Free. Please contact Gill Coates to book (see page 5 for contact details.)

Tech-Takeback **Community Recycling Activity**

Thames Ditton Community Centre, From 11-5pm,

Local residents and businesses can offload their unused and forgotten-about tech (working or broken) at the community centre and learn all about e-waste.

Anyone with unwanted tech including PCs, tablets, laptops, cables, mobile phones, hard drives, USBs, CDs, DVDs, games consoles, digital cameras and sat navs can drop them off with the Tech-Takeback (TTB), a not-for-profit pop-up shop based in Brighton.

Circular Economy, Reuse, recycling and digital inclusion with Prof David Greenfield co-founder of not-for-profit Tech-Takeback (TTB) **Talk**

Thames Ditton Community Centre, 11.30 & 1.30pm

Prepare to see electronic waste (one of the fastest growing, most hazardous forms of waste) in a completely new light.

Activists Hub **Advice from the experts**

Thames Ditton Library, Drop in from 11am until 4pm

Meet our speakers, authors, charities and activists to find out what it's like to get involved or speak up to defend the earth.

Includes *Use Your Money for Good* where Festival sponsors Russell-Cooke will be on hand to advise on how to leave a legacy to benefit the planet.

Second Hand September **Community Activity** With special guest T.B.C.

Thames Ditton Community Centre 3-5pm (see RA website)

From fashion to interiors, learn to keep stuff in circulation for longer. A series of talks and mini workshops, including Bo's Upcycled Pet Toys. Learn how to upcycle, customise, swap, resell and repair from our brilliant local initiatives and businesses.

Sustainable travel clinic with Anna Hughes **Talk and Q&A**

2-3pm, Thames Ditton Community Centre

Flight-free adventurer and author Anna Hughes is the director of a campaign group that encourages people to travel without flying. She will answer questions on travelling without costing the earth.

Natural Flow Writing with Katie Randerson **Workshop**

Thames Ditton library, 3pm- 4.30pm,

A second chance to enjoy Katie's crative writing workshop. (Details as before)

From Garden to Garment with Bella Gonshorovitz the Allotment Fashionista **Talk, Q&A, book signing**

Thames Ditton Community Centre, 1.00-1.45pm

The global fashion industry according to some estimates, creates 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions. Bella Gonshorovitz who used to work for the biggest fashion brands in the world sees a different way forward for our wardrobes. Hear about her new book *Grow, Cook, Dye, Wear* which puts the power for a sustainable lifestyle in your hands.

FESTIVAL FINALE

From the Understory: Rainforest Reconnect **Recital**

Vera Fletcher Hall, 6.30 pm

The composer and musician, Alice Boyd performs her haunting elegiac and earth focused repertoire. An amazing opportunity to hear the Eden Project's composer in residence.

Discover the winners of our photography competition and then....

Take a Whale Bath with natural history writer Tom Mustill

Vera Fletcher Hall, 7pm.

Tom Mustill is an acclaimed wildlife and climate filmmaker. His hits include the viral film featuring Greta Thunberg, Nature Now which has amassed millions of views.

In 2015 he was whale watching when a humpback breached onto his kayak and nearly killed him. A video clip of the event went viral, and Tom found himself inundated with theories about what happened. He became obsessed with trying to find out what the whale had been thinking. He wished he could just ask it. In the process of making a film about his experience, he discovered that might not be such a crazy idea.

Tom's brand-new book, *How To Speak Whale* combines new developments in natural science and AI to decode the language of whales. In this incredible festival first Tom will lead us in a whale bath. **We don't know what that means either, but it is sure to be unmissable. what a way to close our festival!**

Local musician receives British Empire Medal Honour



Musical greats, Bill Geldard (right) with Johnny Dankworth (left)

Bill Geldard has lived in Weston Green for almost 60 years. A renowned trombonist, conductor and bandleader, composer and arranger, he was recently awarded the British Empire Medal for Services to Music in the 2022 Queen's Birthday and Platinum Honours' list. Locally, he's been a musical celebrity since the 1980s: initially

conducting the Oxted Brass Band, and then coaching many big bands in Surrey (including the Ember Band), before recently retiring at the age of 90 following a stroke. With a menagerie of musical memorabilia such as scrapbooks, photos and diaries at his side, we looked back.

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How did music become such a big part of your life?

I grew up in Spennymoor in County Durham. My father was a coal miner but he loved music and played the violin and viola, and my mother played the piano. I was learning to play the violin at age 4 and I have early memories of the string quartet rehearsal sessions which took place in our house every week. I don't think there was any way I could have escaped being a musician. I remember my dad saying, '*No lad of mine is going down the pit*'.

Why did you switch to the trombone?

Dad exchanged a radio speaker for a trombone with a neighbour, but he couldn't get on with it because he had false teeth, so it just sat in a cupboard in its paper bag case. Dad found a first-class trombonist to teach me, who fixed up an unplayable trombone (it was an old brass peashooter), and taught me how to buzz on the mouthpiece. That was the start of my life with the trombone and it's been wonderful.

Who were the key people who influenced you?

Probably the biggest influence was Tommy Collinson, the conductor of the Shildon LNER band. He was a hard taskmaster and with him I really learned how to make music, not just play the notes. Bill Russo, a renowned American composer and arranger taught me a lot about composing and arranging music and that opened up the opportunity of arranging music for the BBC Radio Orchestra which I really enjoyed. Overall, I've been fortunate to have some great teachers, conductors and band colleagues and I have learned from all of them.

You became professional at the age of 15 - how did that happen?

I was spotted when I was playing concerts in my father's works canteen and offered a job at the Eden Theatre in Bishop Auckland. Mum converted one of dad's dress suits into

a suitable evening suit for my debut as a paid professional musician. I was rehearsing and performing alongside studying for a music diploma and learning to play the viola. It wasn't uncommon for me to play at dances that started at midnight! I then received a letter from the BBC to audition for a solo spot on children's hour. My career was starting to take off.

What have been the highlights of your musical career?

I've enjoyed the variety. When I was doing my national service in the RAF in the late 1940's, I played with the RAF Squadronaires.

Then in the fifties, I worked in the big bands with George Evans, Ted Heath and Johnny Dankworth. During the sixties I worked with EMI as a session musician, playing with many of the biggest stars, including Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, Tony Bennett, Liza Minnelli and Shirley Bassey. In the seventies – still with EMI - I played in Alexis Korner and John Cameron's CCS band '*Tap Turns on the Water*' which reached number five in the UK hit parade, and an instrumental version of Led Zeppelin's '*Whole Lotta Love*' which was used as the theme music for the BBC's Top of the Pops



The RAF Squadronaires



The George Evans band on the road

It sounds glamorous, but you worked hard ten hours every day and you were either bored to death or scared to death. There was no room for mistakes. But I wouldn't have it any other way – it's been a good life.

Your wife, the late Gracie Cole, was an accomplished trumpet and cornet player – how did you meet?

When I was playing with George Evans we did a gig with the Ivy Benson band - a famous all girls band. Gracie was their first trumpet player, playing loud and clear, and I suggested that we recruited her. We started dating. Later she became my wife and the mother of my two daughters, Kim and Lois. When we decided to return to our brass band roots in the 1980's, we enjoyed working together locally – Gracie on the cornet when I was at Oxted, and on trumpet when I coached the other Surrey big bands. We raised lots of money locally for different charities.

Melody Maker which said “*With a girl trumpet star in its otherwise all-male brass team, the George Evans Orchestra now rejoices in a trumpet-trombone romance.*”



Melody Maker 1951 covered the wedding

Bill and Gracie's wedding featured in

How did you and your family end up in Weston Green?



Garry Brown (far left) introduced Bill (second from left) to the area

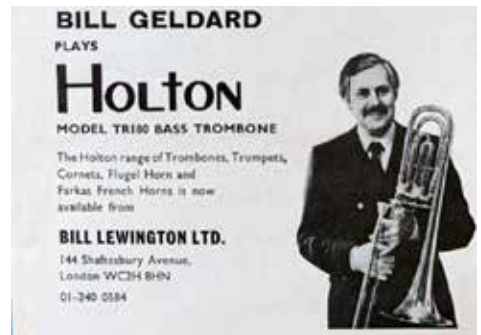
Garry Brown, a fellow trombonist in the George Evans band, became a very good friend of mine. He had a friend who lived in Thames Ditton and introduced me to the village. As soon as I saw the cake shop on the corner (where the Lodge Brothers are now located), I knew that this was the place for me and my family. Gracie was pregnant when we moved into the area in 1957 and initially we were able to afford a house in West Molesey overlooking the Hurst Park racecourse. In 1966 they started building on the racecourse, so we decided to move to Weston Green, and we have been here ever since.

What are you most proud of?

In 1990, my wife Gracie and I felt very privileged to receive the Freedom of the City of London for our services to music, and I enjoyed the acknowledgement from the British Trombone Society in 2019 when they gave me their lifetime achievement award. It is, of course, a great honour to be recognised in the Queen's Platinum Honours list – although I haven't seen the medal yet!

What is your advice for aspiring young musicians?

It's never too late to learn and you never stop learning. Listen, and then try and do it. When playing in a band it's very important that you know what is going on around you.



Bill was the face of trombone advertising!

Julie Royce

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In praise of Long Ditton Recreation Ground



Although I live in Thames Ditton (albeit on the ‘wrong’ side of the Portsmouth Road!), I live very near this wonderful resource, walk there nearly every day and have chance to observe it in all seasons of the year. I often wonder how many others who walk on ‘the rec’, as it is fondly known, really look and appreciate the beauty it has to offer. I started writing this in early autumn last year and the trees planted at intervals around the edge were changing colours. The acacias especially are spectacular in bright yellows. But our trees have so much to offer at all times of the year.

In spring and early summer, we have showy blossom trees. There is a whole row of delicious white cherry blossom trees behind the tennis courts and pink cherries near the playground. But also pause and look closely at the acers with their leaves, dark green on the upper sides and red on the lower, held on scarlet stalks. Their winged fruits hang in tight clusters of delicate pink and pale green. As you walk past the linden (lime) trees in full flower on a warm day, breathe in their heady perfume. And don’t forget to marvel at the huge oak, near the railings on the Ewell Road side of the green, which must be well over a hundred years old, a survivor from whatever was here before.

Around the edge of the Rec are shrubs that have either taken up residence there or are spilling over from the neighbouring gardens. You will see honeysuckle flowers even in October, a hedge covered in hundreds of delicate white bell-like blooms of winter flowering clematis in the depths of winter, and beds of daffodils to enjoy in



Elderflowers in the spring

springtime. There is a variety of roses from deep pink to delicate pale yellow, as well as lilac and jasmine in the warmer months and large plate like blooms of elderflower. After meeting an experienced ‘*brewer*’ of elderflower cordial with an armful of blooms, I made my first batch of cordial this year from blooms collected at the side of the Rec. So easy to make and so refreshing, diluted well with water as a summer cold drink. Wild flowers like purple mallow and blue echium and white trumpets of hedge bindweed grow wherever they can in summer. Before the grass is cut, the field is often covered in white clover, which the bees love. But don’t go walking in open sandals or cross it with your dog. You might regret it!

For those like me who like to forage, there are several big clumps of brambles. Last August, my grandson and I picked bags full of juicy blackberries and made several batches of coulis, which we enjoyed with yogurt or ice cream. The harvest this year looks as if it will be even better. And I've even found some ripe raspberries that have escaped from an adjoining garden.

Stand in the middle of the Rec and gaze. There is a wonderful feeling of space and chance to breathe under the immensity of the sky. The cloud effects are often spectacular. It can be cloudless blue at one end and dark and looming at the other. And you can feel far away from the busy traffic that passes on the surrounding roads.

Of course, the Rec is popular with dog walkers of all ages and varieties of dogs and many a friendship has been forged by meetings over dogs on a regular basis. At the weekends it is alive with footballers, from the very young, just starting, to the teams of the more mature and their supporters. Our cricket pavilion has been redecorated and is gleaming in its coat of white paint. The cricket pitch is lovingly restored before play begins in the summer and cut and rolled to perfection. I have even seen a couple practising tight rope walking with a cord suspended between two trees and others doing meditative yoga on the grass. The Doorstep Coffee van (run by a neighbour of mine) sells coffee and cake several times a week next to the cricket pavilion, so you can enjoy a hot cuppa while you stroll around the field. The tennis courts are in constant use, and we have a basketball court, an open air gym, two table tennis tables and a children's playground. Our Rec is regularly mown, and our bins emptied daily.

How lucky we are and how unthinking and selfish are some users who toss their rubbish about even though bins are within



Long Ditton Rec in the summer sun

easy reach or are too busy chatting to notice their dog 'performing'! Before COVID made us more nervous I used to pick up cans and plastic bottles and convey them to the nearest bin. Sometimes on a Saturday morning I used to meet a good citizen who always came out with a plastic carrier bag and went around picking up other people's rubbish. A concern I have heard expressed lately by regular users of our Rec is the disappearance of some of the benches that used to be sited around the edge of the field. Please, Elmbridge Council, can we have our benches back so that the elderly can sit and relax and have a chat. That circular metal picnic affair is not the same!

So, wherever you come from, next time you use the Rec, pause and look, say a silent thanks to those who maintain it and do your bit to keep it lovely for everyone who uses it.

Jenny Woolfe

River safety at Albany Reach



Nell with one of the 'water aware' signs that aim to help keep people safe at Albany Reach

In 2020 I wrote about the impact of an explosion of visitors to the riverside at Albany Reach as the Covid pandemic eased.

At that time we were working to resolve the traffic chaos in Aragon Avenue and dealing with shocking amounts of litter. Neighbours got together and set up the **Albany Reach Litter Picking Group** and liaised with Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC) to get bigger, fox-proof bins.

I was also increasingly alarmed that many visitors did not seem aware of the potential dangers of the Thames and started talking with EBC and other agencies to see what could be done to improve river safety. The sad instances of drowning in the UK this summer, particularly recently at Hampton

Court Bridge and Taggs Island, has really highlighted to me the need for river safety equipment.

For the last year I have been talking to organisations involved in river safety regarding safety equipment and have engaged increasingly with EBC. You may have seen the banners at the site encouraging people to 'Be Water Aware'.

I am now pleased to say that EBC is planning to install signage and rescue throw lines at Albany Reach and our RA Surrey County Councillor Nick Darby is going to fund them from his councillor's allowance. There are a number of things to be finalised, for example Surrey Fire and Rescue (SRFS) need to agree wording and reference numbers for the emergency call-out services, and the best locations for the equipment remains to be decided. But it is good to see things are under way.

The wonderful RNLI Lifeboats is one of the organisations I have had discussions with about river safety. Our closest RNLI station is at Teddington and it can apparently respond to an incident in our area in 15 minutes. Matt Allchurch, Lifeboat Operations Manager at Teddington RNLI station and his team are prepared to come and give instruction in the use of the river safety equipment once it is installed.

If you are interested in how we keep Albany Reach enjoyable and safe and would like to get involved, please give me a call on 07711 017100.

Nell Hickman
Local resident

Discover Home of Compassion

Home of Compassion Care Home is a Grade II listed mansion in the village of Thames Ditton, Surrey.

Quality care and residents' wellbeing are at the core of Home of Compassion. An outstanding place of beauty that offers residential, nursing and specialist dementia care for elderly residents within a restored and extended 18th Century Grade II listed mansion. Our luxurious living environment is home for up to 78 residents in a unique setting of approximately 2.5 acres on the bank of the River Thames in Surrey, overlooking the grounds of Hampton Court.

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**The team at
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really do have
Compassion. I know
my mum is well
looked after here.**

Family member

most to us is the wellbeing of each of our residents, whatever their circumstances, whatever their needs. We are not here to take over lives, we are here to help live them, and we are always on hand with discreet assistance when required.

Comfort and Wellbeing of Residents

The main house boasts grand reception rooms including the magnificent first floor library and ground floor cinema room, private dining room, lounge and hair salon. There is a dedicated activities room with an extensive programme of events for residents' health and wellbeing, with chair aerobics and gardening club being particular favourites.

Customer service is crucial to the success of resident comfort and wellbeing. The Hotel Services Manager and team provide a 24-hour service and our menus use seasonal and local produce – some of which is



Explore the magnificent first floor library with comfy armchairs and a quiet space to read.



Host a dinner party or have afternoon tea with friends and family in the private dining room.

grown in our very own vegetable garden - forming the basis of the extensive restaurant-grade menus. Room service is also available, with a selection of lighter meals and snacks. A concierge service attends to a host of other requirements from ordering flowers and arranging dry cleaning to booking theatre tickets.

Choice and independence

When it comes to individual bedrooms, we help our residents to put their unique stamp on their room and keep things just how they like them. All bedrooms are ensuite and have delightful furniture and furnishings. Our home is surrounded by beautiful landscaped gardens with several rooms having access to the gardens directly from their room.

Our bistro is perfect for socialising with family and friends and has a kitchen areas for making drinks. If you prefer to have some alone time, you can explore quiet nooks with comfy armchairs, classic novels and books on the shelves. To keep the mind sharp you'll find board games, cards and puzzles too - there's plenty to keep our residents engaged if they choose.

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Meet your distributors – Alison Whittle



Your copy of Thames Ditton Today was put through your letterbox by one of our volunteer distributors.

Who are they and what are they up to when they are not pounding the streets delivering magazines?

Allison delivers to Angel Road.

How and when did you start living in Thames Ditton?

Our first home was in Tolworth and we moved to Thames Ditton in 1989 and I still live in the same house.

How did you become a distributor?

I used to help with refreshments at The Vera Fletcher Hall and someone there suggested I do it.

A brief ‘potted biography’?

I was born and brought up in Southampton where I went to school. I was perhaps not the perfect student as the only set of ‘lines’ I ever had to write were, “*I must learn to curb my exuberance during the quiet part of the lesson*”. I am more practical than academic.

My first job was with Ordnance Survey in Southampton, which at that time was part of the Civil Service and I was later transferred to Tolworth Tower. I always have an Ordnance Survey Road Atlas in the car of course! I was driving at 17 and had my first car then – which was a Morris Minor. I later moved on to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Ministry of Defence.



Alison delivers to Angel Road

More recently I was Assistant Centre Manager at the YMCA in Surbiton. At the time it had a restaurant, a gym, a Senior Programme and a 122-bed hostel. People in the hostel were referred there for accommodation in the hope that they would be rehabilitated within 2 years. It was a very 'hands on' role. People have misconceptions about Surbiton YMCA. They notice that police cars are often outside but do not realise that the police hire a room there as a base. I saw the job advertised when was volunteering at the YMCA on Christmas Day with a local church.

I am now working at Surbiton Methodist Church as a part-time administrator.

What hobbies and activities do you enjoy?

I'm someone who can't say "No"! So, I have done a lot of voluntary work. I have been very involved with the Guides and was a leader in Surbiton for 25 years. Within the Guide movement I have had some more senior roles including Camp Advisor and District Commissioner. The Promise states that "A Guide thinks of others before herself" and that seems to come naturally to me. People sometimes forget that ALL Guiders and Scout leaders are volunteers.

I have also helped with a blind club and with organising and raising money to fund overseas trips for Marie Curie. I seem to be always looking to help people even if it's just reaching something from a high shelf in a supermarket - because I am quite tall.

I have played badminton since 1987. The club meets every Thursday.

I also love gardening and DIY. When I was 12 my parents bought a house (that they still live in) which needed a lot of work. I was encouraged to knock down walls and generally have a go and I still like tackling

practical jobs.

I share a small boat called a Whaly (known as a Wally of course) which is at Shepperton Marina.

Is there one thing that perhaps people don't know about you?

A tip I was given when heading out for an overseas expedition was to always wear my trekking boots on the plane – so I do.

QUICK FIRE QUESTIONS

Favourite Holidays?

I'm an outdoor girl so have had caravans and hired narrow boats and of course did lots of camping with the Guides. But I also like to go to Spain for a more relaxing break.

Favourite pub?

The Angel is my local.

Favourite drink?

A nice G & T with Thames Ditton or Hampton Court gin or a glass of wine.

Favourite pet?

I don't have my own dog, but I am lucky that I get lots of opportunities to walk or look after friends' and neighbours' dogs.

Favourite Restaurant?

Lots – I love food!

Pat Cooke

Soroptimists making the world a better place for women and girls



Soroptimists meet at the Wheathseaf

Soroptimist International is a vibrant and dynamic worldwide organisation for today's women working through service projects to advance human rights and the status of women. For over 100 years the volunteer run charity has been raising money for projects that empower women and girls around the world. The local Weybridge branch is looking for new members to join its ranks.

From its new base in Esher the team are keen to find women to help with projects as diverse as funding a female driven tuk tuk taxi to safely transport women and girls in Sri Lanka to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) bursaries for girls at Royal Holloway University. Donations are given to local food banks, including 100 Easter eggs for children, and in the past, support to a woman's refuge.

Recently members asked local shop owners to display posters in their windows in support of International Women's Day. The club donated £1,000 to the charity's Ukraine fund and this money has been distributed to clubs in the Ukraine to help

supply food and medicines.

The club also lobbies local MPs on women's issues such as the Domestic Abuse Bill – Non-fatal Strangulation and others although the club is not politically allied in any way.

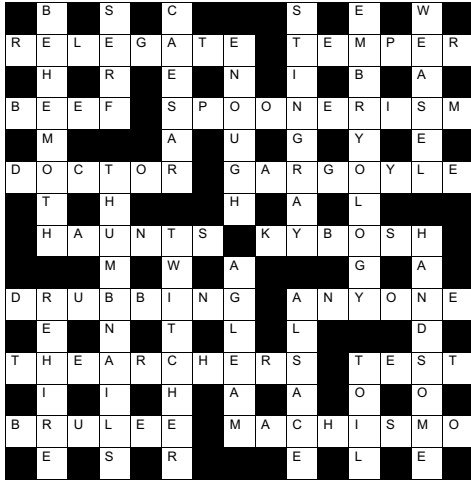
During the monthly supper meetings at the Wheatsheaf Pub in Esher there are speakers on a wide variety of subjects, mostly female related, such as ovarian cancer, domestic violence etc. as well as more light-hearted subjects. There are also social get-togethers hosted by members at their homes.

The club runs a fashion show with afternoon tea in conjunction with another local club as a fundraiser. The club has friendship links with others in Europe and arranges visits to each other's countries from time to time.

To find out more please visit sigbi.org/Weybridge and/ or contact Alexis at [alexis.neville@btinternet.com](mailto:neville@btinternet.com)



Solution to the Summer Crossword



Congratulations to the senders of the first three correct entries opened in the shuffle.

Each wins a £5 voucher to spend in local shops.

David Jerram
3 Boyle Farm Road
KT7 0TS

Graeme Edwards
17 Saville Close
KT7 0BU

Tessa Craig
64 Speer Road
KT7 0PW



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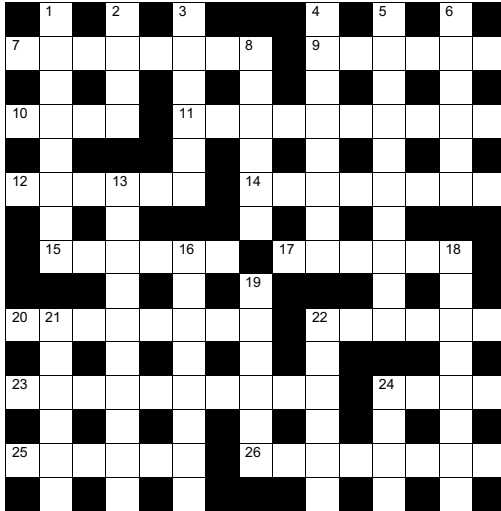
020 8398 5703

Anna 07801 921166 – Kate 07956 641881
RHS and Merrist Wood Qualified

Peace

Hope

Autumn Crossword



by **Howard and Bob Cruthers**

The first three correct entries randomly opened after the closing date of October 20 will win a £5 voucher to spend in local shops.

Please send the completed puzzle (or photocopy) enclosing your name and address, with the envelope clearly marked 'Crossword Competition' to:

Thames Ditton Today
Crossword Competition
24 High Street
Thames Ditton
KT7 0RY

ACROSS CLUES

- 7 Avian frequenter of prison? (8)
- 9 Girl's name. Dexy's Midnight Runners sang, "Come On ..." (6)
- 10 Jeopardy (4)
- 11 Chemicals that act like hormones, but outside the body (10)
- 12 Dead body (6)
- 14 Toxic (8)
- 15 Climax (6)
- 17 Tractable - coiled (anag) (6)
- 20 Edible squid (8)
- 22 Adulation (6)
- 23 Of a philosophy that stresses the personal worth of the individual (10)
- 24 Demure (4)
- 25 Annoy, sharply? (6)
- 26 Smashed (8)

DOWN CLUES

- 1 Canadian province – "the polar bear capital" (8)
- 2 Adverse criticism, of aircraft? (4)
- 3 Nun's headdress (6)
- 4 Apache leader; battle cry (8)
- 5 Drug addiction (10)
- 6 Tranquil (6)
- 8 Normandy seaport (6)
- 13 Influential communication; from the Latin, "to spread" (10)
- 16 Tested (8)
- 18 Kitchen counter? (3, 5)
- 19 Break in activity (6)
- 21 Queen Victoria was, reportedly, not this (6)
- 22 Loud temporary setback? (6)
- 24 Elope (4)

SERVICES, CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND GROUPS

SERVICES

Cheer (Concern and Help for East Elmbridge Retired)	Manager	01372 879321
Dittons & Weston Green NeighbourCare	Frankie Bell	07790 472993
Elmbridge Borough Council Community Support Services		
Thames Ditton Centre for the community	Mon & Thurs	0208 3985921
Thames Ditton Dementia Centre	Nikki Harding	01372 474526
Meals on Wheels, Community Transport, Dial-a-Ride, Alarm & Telecare services, Relief Carers	ask for service at central switchboard	01372 474552
Homesupport Elmbridge	Thomasina Breslin	01932 267128
Esher and District Stroke Club	Ann Pollock	0208398 6132
Voluntary Action Elmbridge	Sally Dubery	01372 463587
Surrey Youth and Adult Education Service	Elmbridge Area	020 8979 8334

GROUPS

1st Thames Ditton Brownies	Bronach Hughes	bronachhughes@hotmail.com
3rd Thames Ditton Brownies	Emily Wattret	3rdthamesdittonbrownies@gmail.com
1st Weston Green (All Saints) Scout Group	Carole Needham	gsl@westongreenscouts.org.uk
1st Weston Green Guides	Sumathi Jeevaratnam	sumathi.jeevaratnam@gmail.com
2nd Weston Green Guides		2wgguides@gmail.com
2nd Thames Ditton Guides	Bronach Hughes	bronachhughes@hotmail.com
1st Weston Green Brownies (All Saints)		1wgbrownies@gmail.com
3rd Weston Green Brownies		3wgbrownies@gmail.com
1st Weston Green Rainbows	Lizzie Owen	westongreenrainbows@gmail.com
4th Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts	Alison Derrick	020 8398 0041
Dittons Scout Group	Stuart Jack	07971 479740
Emberbrook Trefoil Guild	Mary Bowen	020 8398 6857
Friends of Bushey and Home Parks	Jean Smith	020 8977 9391
Girlguiding in Thames Ditton and Weston Green		dittonsdistrict.hjh@gmail.com
Friends of Walsingham Care	Miss Valerie Chicken	0208 398 2932
Molesey and Dittons Neighbourhood Watch	Chairman: John Haberfield	020 8398 5256
Parents and Toddlers(St Nicholas church)	Information	020 8398 7211
Ripieno Choir	Nick Harris	020 8399 7231
Surrey Bell-ringers	Giles Andre	020 8979 1994
Bereavement Café	St Nicholas Church Hall	020 8398 9641

CLUBS

Albany Motor Yacht Club	Secretary	01784466651
All Saints Weston Lunch Club	Alison Cruthers	07957 347170
Arts and Heritage Club	Carol Butcher	01932 867511
Cercle Francais d'Esher	Brigitte Tiller	01932 860842 brigitte@ptiller.com
Claygate Bridge Club	Hon. Secretary	020 8398 1710
Colets Health & Fitness	Giordano Orsini	020 8398 7108
Ditton Bridge Club	John Dagnall	02083984463
Dittons Skiff and Punting Club	Hon Secretary	07710 139417
Dittons & Hinchley Wood Royal British Legion	Hon Secretary	020 8398 6263
Ember Players (Drama) Ember Sports Club	Elaine Sesemann	07801 943392

Ember Sports Club	Zenda Hedges	07717 304146
Ember Sports Club: Bowls	Sylvia Jones	01932 788701
Ember Sports Club: Croquet	Dr. David Cooke	01932 862841
Ember Sports Club: Tennis	Annabel Duncan	0208 786 6318
Esher Bowling Club	Roger Cooper	01372 468109
Esher Bridge Centre	Paul Whicker	01372 460157
Esher 41 and Ex-Round Tablers' Club	Dr. R. Tudor-Williams	020 8398 0108
Folk Dance Club (St Nicholas)	David Ford	020 8715 2148
Long Ditton Cricket Club	Nigel Hardy	020 8398 8361
Long Ditton Garden Club	Heather Harvey	020 8398 2642
Model Railway Society (Hampton Court)	Secretary	01932 241224
Old Cranleigh Rugby Club	Piers Cushing	07790 003731
Old Cranleigh Hockey Club	Simon Marshall (Men)	07801 737695
	Helen Hawes (Ladies)	07771 557900
Probus club, Hinchley Wood & the Dittons	Edmund Woolley	020 8398 3581
Probus Club, Sandown	Julian Rye	01932 976994
Probus Club of Molesey	Roger Marlow	0208 398 5460
Probus Club of Claremont	George Cameron	020 8224 1392
River Club (BMYC)	David Walker	0870 460 3586
Surbiton Croquet Club	Alec Thomas	020 8398 2391
Surbiton Golf Club	Secretary	0208 398 3101
Surbiton Hockey Club	Secretary	020 8398 2401
Thames Ditton Lawn Tennis Club	Rich Simkins	rpsimkins@gmail.com
Thames Ditton & Esher Golf Club	Mark Rodbard	020 8398 1551
Thames Ditton Squash Club (Colets)	Dave Peck	020 8398 7108
Thames Ditton Cricket Club	Geoff Dryden	07813 805 645
		Geoff.Dryden@hotmail.com

SOCIETIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance	Mrs Brenda Denby	0208 398 6054
Ember Choral	Linda Bridges	020 8399 5402
Esher and Molesey Garden Society	Jean Billett	01372 465961
Esher and District Amnesty International	Cherry Eddy (Campaigns)	0208 398 4377
Hampton Court Way Allotment Association	Lettings: Piotr Hennig	020 8398 5358
Long Ditton Youth Club	Toni Izard	07749 633973
Lynwood Allotment Society	Gill Vickers	020 8398 4870
Molesey and District Antiques Society	Linda Lambert	020 8398 1476
NADFAS (Decorative & Fine Arts) Kingston	Mrs. Valerie Windsor	020 8549 9967
Oxshott & Cobham Music Society	Cherry Eddy (Membership)	0208 398 4377
		cherryeddy102@gmail.com
Soroptimist Women	Jean Smith	07770 417814
Thames Ditton Women's Institute (W.I.)	Secretary	020 8398 8615

OTHER

University of the Third Age (U3A)	Hon Sec Anne Brown	01932 881633
Vera Fletcher Hall	Lettings: Amelia Crafts	08456 528 529
	Membership: Sue Morris	020 8224 0980
Weston Green Conservation Area Advisory Committee		wgcaac@outlook.com

Please contact the Editor to amend these listings

Life saving defibrillator at the Vera Fletcher Hall



Defibrillator at the Vera Fletcher Hall

Thanks to Nick Darby, Surrey County Councillor for The Dittons, agreeing to provide a generous grant out of his annual Members' Community Allocation Fund, the Vera Fletcher Hall Association has been able to buy a defibrillator. Readers may have already noticed the yellow and green cabinet mounted on the front of the building.

In an emergency, the rescuer must call 999 on their own phone and ask for the Ambulance Service giving their location and the operator will provide the code number to open the cabinet and will stay on the line to assist whilst dispatching an ambulance. The defibrillator automatically provides step by step verbal instructions for the rescuer.

Hopefully, the defibrillator will rarely, if ever, be needed, but it is in a busy area, near the station, on a bus route and very visible as the photo demonstrates.

The Vera Fletcher Hall Committee is actively looking for volunteers to help at the Hall in a general way.

We are particularly looking for anybody with experience of, or interest in, theatrical productions. The Hall's cultural programme has fallen behind a bit for different reasons and needs some rejuvenation. If you are interested we would love to hear from you.

Please contact Hermione Delamare on hermioned@aol.com or Martin Wilberforce on wilberforces@btinternet.com or 07711 098936.



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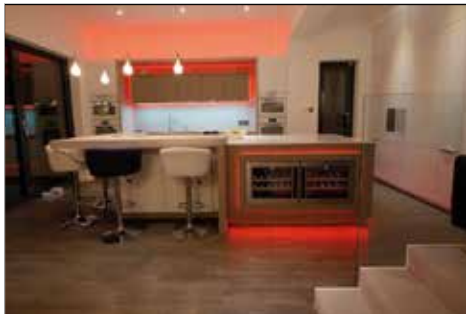
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